

Message Text

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ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 AID-20 EB-11 IGA-02 OMB-01 AGR-20

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FM AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1853

AMEMBASSY PARIS

INFO AMEMBASSY DAKAR

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DAKAR FOR DATT

E.O. 11652: DECON DEC 31, 1974

TAGS: PINS MR FR

SUBJ: FOCCART VISIT: FRENCH DROUGHT AID/DEVELOPMENT AND
MILITARY ASSISTANCE

REF: PARIS 2438, NOUAKCHOTT 0001, AND 0049

1. ELYSEE SECRETARY GENERAL FOR AFRO-MALGACHE AFFAIRS ARRIVED
NOUAKCHOTT JANUARY 29 ON WHAT HE DESCRIBED DOR AN AIRPORT
PRESS CONFERENCE AS FIRST STOP ON GOOD-WILL TOUR OF DROUGHT-
EFFECTED SAHELIAN STATES ON BEHALF PRESIDENT POMPIDOU. FOCAART
HAD CONVERSATIONS IN NOUAKCHOTT WITH MINISTERS OF HEALTH
AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT--WHO HAVE PRIMARY DROUGHT RELIEF AND REHABILITA
TION
RESPONSIBILITIES--AND THEN FLEW SOUTH TO FOURTH REGION (KAEDI)
FOR MEETINGS WITH PRESIDENT OULD DADDAH, WHO CURRENTLY ENGAGED
IN POLITICAL FENCE-MENDING TOUR OF PREDOMINANTLY BLACK FLEUVE
ZONE. FOCCART ALSO VISITED OTHER DROUGHT-RAVAGED AREAS OF
FOURTH REGION IN COMPANY WITH ACTING FAC DIRECTOR. HE DEPARTS
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FEBRUARY 2.

2. COMMENT: THOUGH WE HAVE ALMOST NO SPECIFIC INFORMATION ON CONTENT FOCCART-OULD DADDAH TALKS, IT SEEMS OBVIOUS THEY INCLUDED POLITICS AS WELL AS DROUGHT MATTERS. WE UNDERSTAND FROM OUR FRENCH EMBASSY SOURCES THAT CONTINUED FRENCH MILITARY TRAINING WAS ONE SUBJECT FOR DISCUSSION. THE FORTY-MAN PLUS FRENCH MILITARY TRAINING MISSION DEPARTED AT GIRM'S REQUEST FOLLOWING THE FEBRUARY 1973 REVISION OF THE 1961 FRANCO-MAURITANIAN ACCORDS. THE FRENCH EMBASSY SAYS, HOWEVER, THAT THE DOOR REMAINS OPEN FOR CONTINUED TRAINING IN FRANCE FOR MAURITANIAN MILITARY, AS WELL AS FOR TDY FRENCH MILITARY TRAINING TEAMS HERE. IN FACT, GIRM SOLDIERS AND AIRMEN HAVE CONTINUED TO BE TRAINED IN FRANCE DESPITE ABSENCE OF DEFENSE AGREEMENTS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES.

3. ON THE DROUGHT AID AND DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE SIDE, NOTHING CONCRETE EMERGED FROM THE FOCCART VISIT. THE FRENCH EMBASSY TWO WEEKS AGO SIGNED TWO MILLION DOLLARS (FF 10.23 MILLION) WORTH OF AID AGREEMENTS UNDER 1973 FAC PROJECT FUNDS. TOTAL FRENCH ASSISTANCE IN 1973 AMMOUNTED TO SOME 4.8 MILLION DOLLARS IN PROJECT AID, EXCLUDING THE COST OF TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PERSONNEL. DROUGHT ASSISTANCE IN 1973 WAS IN THE FORM OF 9000 METRIC TONS OF CEREALS, WITH A FURTHER 7,000 TONS SCHEDULED FOR DELIVERY THIS YEAR.

4. THOUGH 1973 FRENCH AID PROGRAMS IN MAURITANIA WERE LARGER THAN THE AVERAGE OF PAST YEARS, FRENCH OFFICIALS HERE REMIND ALL WHO WILL LISTEN THAT 1974 WILL BE A LEAN YEAR IN TERMS OF FRENCH AID TO MAURITANIA. IN FACT, THE TWO MILLION DOLLARS WORTH OF PROJECT AGREEMENTS SIGNED ON JANUARY 17 (PARA 3 ABOVE) REPRESENT THE LAST FRENCH AID TRANCHE IN THE PIPE LINE PRIOR TO MAURITANIA'S EXIT FROM THE FRANC ZONE. NOW THAT GIRM HAS CAST ITSELF LOOSE FROM THE FRANC ZONE THESE OFFICIALS SAY FRANCE WILL CONSIDER NEW PROJECT FINANCING BY CASE BASIS ONLY. FRANCE'S IMPORTANT TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS (WHICH COMPRISE OVER 300 RESIDENT TECHNICIANS) WILL NOT, HOWEVER, BE EFFECTED BY THIS TIGHT-FISTED POLICY.
SHURTLEFF

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